

Ecclesiastes

KEY THEMES:

1. The tragic reality of the fall.
2. The “vanity of life.
3. Sin and death.
4. The joy and the frustration of work.
5. The grateful enjoyment of God’s good gifts.
6. The fear of God.

Source: ESV Study Bible

What do you think of the book?

- Pessimistic/ Optimistic
- Secular/ Religious
- Skeptical/ Hopeful
- Heterodox/ Orthodox
- Fanciful/ Practical

Ecclesiastes does not pretend to preach the Gospel. Rather, it encourages the reader to a God-centered worldview rather than falling victim to frustrations and unanswered questions. ~ *J. Stafford Wright, The Expositor’s Commentary*

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CH’S 1-2:

1.9 “There is nothing new under the sun”

1.14 “All is vanity and a striving after wind.”

The word “vanity” appears in 27 different verses in the book, (sometimes more than once); the statement “All is vanity” begins and ends the book—1.2; 12.8—thus setting the theme and reinforcing the message

2.13 “There is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness.”

2.24 “There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil (*cf.* 3.12; 5.18; 8.15)”

Chapters 3-4

3.1-8 “What a poem that is. It is something worth considering that the world is full of opposites intertangled, good and bad tangling up all the time. Nobody knows. God only knows.” ~ *Pete Seeger, who wrote “Turn! Turn! Turn!” popularized by the Byrds in 1965*

Man is responsible to discern the right times for the right actions *J.S. Wright*

Just War Theory

- Must be waged by *legitimate authority*
- The *cause must be just*
- The *intention* must be just
- All peaceful means for resolution must be exhausted (*last resort*)
- War must be exercised by *proper means*
- Conflict must be *proportional*
- There must be *hope for success*

3.11 God “has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart.”

One thing that elevates us above the animal world, in addition to the God-given sense of eternity, is the desire to understand the whole. This accounts for all science, philosophy, and human knowledge, as well as theology. *J.S. Wright*

3.16 “In the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness.” (*cf. Matt 5.6*)

3.20 “All are from the dust, and to dust all return.”

3.22 “There is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work” (*cf. 2 Thess 3.10*)

4.9-12 “Two are better than one....a three-fold cord is not quickly broken.”